

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR



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**Gov. Perdue Announces Program to Expand Children's Health Insurance  
Coverage to Pilot in Sixteen N.C. Counties**

*Nearly \$700,000 in Funding to Expand Outreach and to Insure Children Entering School*

Raleigh – Gov. Bev Perdue today announced the sixteen high-need counties that will pilot the “Healthy and Ready to Learn” initiative. They are Cleveland, Columbus, Cumberland, Davidson, Edgecombe, Gaston, Halifax, Harnett, Lenoir, Pitt, Randolph, Robeson, Rutherford, Vance, Wayne and Wilson counties. The North Carolina “Healthy & Ready to Learn” (HRL) Partnership will identify uninsured children who are entering kindergarten and are eligible for Medicaid or N.C. Health Choice.

“When our children enter public school, we need to ensure that they are healthy and ready to learn,” said Perdue. “This initiative will help us reach out to more young children across North Carolina to make sure they are receiving the care and coverage they need.”

Year one of the “Healthy and Ready to Learn” initiative begins with these sixteen counties and in year two the program will expand statewide to all 4 and 5 year olds. The initiative is funded by a \$678,210 grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced in October of last year.

Gov. Perdue has asked the N.C. Pediatric Society Foundation to lead the HRL Partnership, which is a coalition of physicians, school nurses, School Health Advisory Councils, state agencies, Local Education Agencies and community-based stakeholders. The N.C. Pediatric Society has an accomplished record in working to improve health care access for medically underserved children.

“North Carolina Pediatricians are excited to begin providing care to uninsured children in these sixteen counties,” said Dr. Marian Earls, the President of the N.C. Pediatric Society. “Having